

aisle join with the gentleman from Oklahoma in support of this resolution.

I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS) for purposes of explaining the resolution.

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for yielding.

First I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) for introducing the resolution to award Mrs. Parks the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor. With such leadership Americans will never forget where we came from and never lose sight of where we must go.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support honoring Mrs. Rosa Parks in the Capitol Rotunda under the dome of the People's House with the Gold Medal of Honor. What could be more appropriate than for Mrs. Parks to receive the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor in the Capitol Rotunda, the structure that unites the House and Senate, a symbol of a government of the people, by the people and for the people. Our majestic Rotunda is the world's emblem of democracy and freedom. Mrs. Parks stood in the face of segregation and started a movement that united a Nation. How appropriate for us to honor her where we come together as Members and where we come together as Americans.

Over 40 years ago, Mrs. Parks united the races on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, and how appropriate for us to honor her in our country's most enduring symbol of unity, the Capitol Rotunda.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the ranking member of the Committee on House Administration.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH) for yielding, and I join the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS).

I do not know how many Americans have seen Rosa Parks. Rosa Parks is a woman small in stature. But that belies the fact that she was a giant in her courage and in her commitment and in the impact she made on America, not just on African Americans, though an impact she had on their lives and the respect accorded to them, but on the lives of every American who live today in a better country, more conscious of our need to give to each individual within our country the respect that they are due as human beings and children of God.

Rosa Parks, Mr. Speaker, is a giant in the history of America. On December 1st, 1955, Rosa Parks looked up from her seat and said, "No, I will not give you my seat. I was here first. I'm an American citizen. I paid my fare. And I ought to be able to sit on this seat." Mr. Speaker, she was absolutely correct. But as Martin Luther King observed some 8 years later, in August of 1963, America had yet to live out the reality of the promises made in our Declaration of Independence and in our

Constitution, that Rosa Parks, like the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. EMERSON), was endowed not by government but by her Creator with certain unalienable rights, and among these were life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And our Constitution said, particularly in the 14th amendment and the 15th amendment, that color would not dictate lesser Americans.

Rosa Parks is a giant, and I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, to join the gentleman from Pennsylvania and the gentleman from Oklahoma in setting aside, as the gentleman from Oklahoma so ably articulated, the Rotunda, a revered spot not only in this country but around the world, to honor Rosa Parks, to say to her, "Thank you. Thank you for helping America be a better country."

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT).

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH). I want to give a special commendation to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) who works hard and did a great job on this issue. I would just like to say that when Rosa Parks sat down on that bus, she stood up for all Americans, not just black Americans. I, too, am honored to be here today.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, let me just also add my voice.

I had the opportunity to meet Rosa Parks when she came to Philadelphia and visited with a group of young people at the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. Observing the crack, she had a fairly profound statement to make about the fact that there was still some need for healing in our own country about issues related to civil rights, but that her work and her life and her legacy had played just a small part. It really was the support and the prayers of millions and millions of Americans of different ethnic backgrounds who supported the efforts of the civil rights movement which really started with her decision not to relinquish her seat.

From time to time I know we have broad disagreements around here, but it is refreshing to see that in a bipartisan way we could come together. I am pleased to join with my colleague and my friend from Oklahoma as we move now to make the rotunda available. Some are honored by having this type of honor bestowed upon them. Today I think the Congress is honored by having an American of Rosa Parks' stature to be able to honor.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 127

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring). That the rotunda of the Capitol is authorized to be used on June 15, 1999, for a ceremony to present a gold medal on behalf of Congress to Rosa Parks. Physical preparations for the ceremony shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as the Architect of the Capitol may prescribe.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2000

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 200 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 1401.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1401) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2000 and 2001 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal years 2000 and 2001, and for other purposes, with Mrs. EMERSON (Chairman pro tempore) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Wednesday, June 9, 1999, amendment No. 14 printed in part A of House Report 106-175 by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ) and offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MEEK) as her designee had been disposed of.

It is now in order to consider amendment No. 15 printed in House Report 106-175.

AMENDMENT NO. 15 OFFERED BY MR. BUYER

Mr. BUYER. Madam Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Part A amendment No. 15 offered by Mr. BUYER:

Page 207, after line 5, add the following new subtitle (and redesignate the succeeding subtitle accordingly):

Subtitle F—Eligibility to Participate in the Thrift Savings Plan

SEC. 661. AUTHORITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE THRIFT SAVINGS FUND.

(a) AUTHORITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE THRIFT SAVINGS FUND.—(1) Subchapter III of chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"§8440e. Members of the uniformed services

"(a)(1) A member of the uniformed services performing active service may elect to contribute to the Thrift Savings Fund—

"(A) a portion of such individual's basic pay; or